

Components of Comprehensive Services

Research shows the following three key factors contribute to preschool benefits for low-income children:

- ▶ Program quality.
- ▶ Dosage (the hours and amount of high-quality preschool).
- ▶ Comprehensiveness of services.

The Washington State Department of Early Learning's (DEL) state-funded preschool program is Early Childhood Education & Assistance Program (ECEAP). ECEAP (pronounced *e-cap*) serves our state's lowest-income families and provides **health, early childhood education** and **family partnership services**.



Health

ECEAP connects children with medical, dental, nutritional and mental health services by working with families to:

- ▶ Determine and plan for ongoing health care needs.
- ▶ Establish a medical and dental home.
- ▶ Access medical and dental services.
- ▶ Support families in advocating for their child's health and safety needs.
- ▶ Provide health coordination services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

Dietitians review menus, which include nutrient-dense foods that are rich in whole-grains, fruits, and vegetables and low in salt, fat, and sugar. Highly processed foods are limited. Menu planning includes parent input, cultural dietary preferences and individual allergy and dietary restrictions.

ECEAP contractors participate in the **USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program** or **National School Breakfast and Lunch Program**.

Early childhood education

ECEAP early childhood education services support children's development and success in many ways:

- ▶ Providing developmentally appropriate curriculum based on family input and child assessments. The curriculum supports kindergarten readiness and includes the domains of the **Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines**.
- ▶ Periodic parent-teacher conferences.
- ▶ Providing rich learning environments that reflect the daily life, family culture and language of the enrolled children.

Family partnerships

Family partnerships include engaging parents and guardians in many levels of program activities, as well as supporting the development of the whole family.

Activities include:

- ▶ Family visits to support families' goals.
- ▶ Parent education.
- ▶ Parent leadership opportunities.

ECEAP uses the **Strengthening Families** approach to:

- ▶ Build protective factors to reduce risk and create optimal outcomes for children and families.
- ▶ Recognize and support parents as decision-makers and leaders.
- ▶ Value each family's culture and uniqueness.

